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FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1273
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE
RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 001021

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR A/S FRAZER, S/E WILLIAMSON, AND AF/SPG
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/01/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [UN](#) [AU](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: NCP INSIDER PLEADS FOR SE WILLIAMSON'S RETURN

REF: A. KHARTOUM 997
[1](#)B. KHARTOUM 933
[1](#)C. KHARTOUM 894

Classified By: CDA Alberto M. Fernandez, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) "We would like Special Envoy Williamson to come back," pleaded NCP negotiator Yahia Bebiker in a meeting with polchief July 6. "We are making progress on Abyei and on elections - all things that are important to you." Bebiker echoed others in the NCP leadership, speculating that SE Williamson must have received a phone call from Washington at the last minute which forced him to abort his negotiations with the Sudanese. "This is just another example of broken promises by the US," carped Bebiker, "we thought Williamson was different." Polchief pointed out that if the GOS does actually follow through with its commitments on Abyei, such as the complete withdrawal of the SAF 31st brigade and setting up of interim administration, the conditions might be right for a continuation of talks but no decision has yet been taken.

[1](#)2. (C) Recently returned from a weekend in Juba negotiating with the SPLM on issues related to the implementation of the Abyei roadmap, Bebiker pointed out that progress had been made on the arbitration mechanism and expressed confidence that a solution would be found on the interim administration. Bebiker observed that the SPLM appeared to be divided on the question of the deputy interim administrator for Abyei, with some taking a moderate stance but FM Deng Alor refusing to accept a local Misseriya Arab. Bebiker argued that since the CPA's Abyei Protocol recognized both the Dinka and Misseriya communities (with regard to wealth sharing) it would be inappropriate to exclude them from the senior leadership of the Abyei interim administration (Note: This is special pleading by Bebiker since the Protocol only refers to the Ngok Dinka as inhabitants of Abyei. End note). Polchief pointed out that Abyei has been defined in the CPA as the former nine Ngok Dinka chiefdoms transferred to Southern Kordofan in 1905, and that most of the Misseriya are only seasonal - there are few permanent Misseriya villages. Bebiker said it would be difficult for the NCP to accept an Interim Administration without a Misseriya deputy, but remained positive that a solution could be found.

[1](#)3. (C) Bebiker said that after signing the "compromis" on Abyei arbitration, GNU Vice President Taha and GOSS Vice President Machar would co-chair a conference on economic development for state governors from across Sudan in Merowe July 8. Bebiker said GNU First President Kiir would travel to Khartoum July 9 to confer on the elections law and discuss progress on the Abyei roadmap.

[1](#)4. (C) Comment: The regime continues to present itself as doing all the right things that would allow a continuation of

bilateral talks with the US, but appears increasingly aware that further talks may be unlikely. Although it would like a near-term solution on Abyei, the NCP wants the interim administration established on its own terms, enabling it to keep the Misseriya in play as a future spoiler. The debate over the deputy slot is more about projecting the influence of the NCP rather than the rights of a northern Arab tribe in Abyei, with an eye toward the popular consultation and the referendum. Khartoum wants to retain the impression that the nomadic Misseriya have a vested interest in Abyei (and its wealth) as much as the sedentary Ngok Dinka. This strategy would pit the Misseriya against the Dinka in the popular consultation as well as the referendum (depending on what time of year these events occur) and would keep Abyei in play as long as possible. It is a dangerous and cynical strategy, one that is likely to provoke continued conflict as Misseriya are encouraged to adopt irredentist views on Abyei not in keeping with either the historic facts or the demographic reality currently on the ground.

FERNANDEZ